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ART AS A MEDIATED STRUCTURE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Education:

Bilingual/Cross-Cultural Education

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by

Lynnea Patricia Hiebert

December 2005

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Approved by:

[redacted]

Barbara Flores, Ph.D., First Reader

11/29/05

Date

[redacted]

Maria Balderrama, Ph.D., Second Reader

ABSTRACT

English Language Learners are a large population of students in California public schools. Held to the same high stakes testing standards as English-only students, English Learners are at a disadvantage with the passing of Proposition 227 which states that English Learners must be taught in English and achieve English language proficiency within one year through Structured English Immersion. Teachers must find a way to make the curriculum meaningful and comprehensible to English Learners as they acquire a second language.

The purpose of this project is to focus on how art enhances written language among English Language Learners in third grade. It develops and designs curriculum through the mediated structure of art to develop English Language Learners' writing in narrative and expository genres, as well as, develop second language proficiency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Barbara Flores - You taught me so much and trained me to be the teacher I am today. Gracias, maestra y amiga.

Dr. Maria Balderrama - Thank you for being the second reader and sharing your insights.

Wendy Chalk who rescued and focused me when I began to get caught up in the details. You taught me to hold the standards in my hand and look for the enduring understandings.

I thank God for my colleagues daily. You had more faith in me than I had in myself in completing this project. Your constant prayers kept me going.

To my husband, Wayne - You have supported me in all ways, always encouraging me, and never letting me give up. This is for you.

I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is power. A person with wisdom is the most effective tool any nation can have in its effort to change the structure of the world. Educators have an enormous challenge and opportunity to effect change in a world that becomes smaller daily. It may not be possible to change the entire nation as a whole, but we can change the small part of it we, as educators, touch daily as we enter our students' lives. Educators teach children how to make meaning out of the world they live in by putting their lives into historical and cultural perspective, teaching them how to see the world from different viewpoints, allowing them to be creative and express ideas that have value, and make connections and apply their new found knowledge to their lives.

For a large part of the population of students in California, English Language Learners, this task often seems daunting. What is known as best practices for English Language Learners is not available to many students. Extensive research establishes that the most efficient way to promote language acquisition for second language learners is through bilingual education. However,

in education we do not always do what is known to be best. Krashen (1997) points out that the "harshest critics [of bilingual education],... (e.g., Rossell & Baker, 1996), do not claim that bilingual education does not work; instead, they claim there is little evidence that it is superior to all-English programs" (p. 4).

The advent of Proposition 227 in California has virtually eliminated bilingual education for many districts, especially those who have limited access to bilingual teachers, are small and/or are rural districts. It is a well-known fact in the educational community that acquisition of a language takes time. Academic language takes even more time to acquire. García and Beltrán (2003) state that

> owing to a prevailing desire among legislators and the majority of their constituents for a "quick fix" that will create a nation of readers at any cost, English literacy learning curricula for English learners have been constructed on a linguistic foundation of quicksand that imperils their academic development. (pp. 198-199)

The ideal of Proposition 227 is to have beginning to early intermediate proficiency level students enter into a structured English immersion classroom for one year. At

the end of that time, students are supposed to be proficient enough to enter a mainstream classroom and succeed with Specially Designed Academic Instruction. Research shows that for most children, oral language proficiency takes up to two years (Krashen, 1994). The reality is that in most school districts students from all levels of proficiency, beginning to advanced, are placed in the mainstream classroom. Thus, English Language Learners must either sink or swim. The passing of Proposition 227 does not give students time to develop language proficiency or literacy.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the implementation of the California State Content Standards has made high stakes testing, such as the CAT6 and California Standards Test (CST), at the forefront of educators' minds. The goal to leave no child behind should be the goal of all educators. However, the time line and manner in which NCLB is being implemented is virtually leaving many children behind, especially English Language Learners.

Educators must do as much as possible to help students attain the required levels of proficiency. If we are going to continue the cognitive development of our English Language Learners, then we must develop a way to

make the content standards comprehensible to them and allow them the opportunity to develop and reach for those standards. Therefore, we must investigate how best to serve our English Language Learners to promote language acquisition and literacy in the most comprehensible manner.

In the search to discover how best to meet the needs of English Language Learners, educators have explored numerous methodologies and strategies to facilitate language acquisition and build literacy. This project was designed with that focus in mind.

Purpose of the Project

This project will use art as the mediated structure and tool to facilitate language acquisition and build writing literacy across content areas. It will focus on how art enhances written language among English Language Learners in third grade. The project will develop and design curriculum in narrative and expository writing, as well as, the use of different art forms to represent meaning and develop second language.

Scope of the Project

Chapter One introduces the need to make content curriculum attainable and comprehensible to English Learners in the advent of high stakes testing.

Chapter Two presents a review of related literature in five key areas: Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, Theories of Language Acquisition, Instructional Strategies, Writing Literacy, and Visual Art and Literacy.

Chapter Three presents the design of the curriculum using a thematic unit based on content standards. The goal is to let go of the teacher's edition of the curriculum and hold onto the state adopted content standards to drive instruction based on English Language Learner's needs. Once the standard to be addressed is identified, then the teacher can look at the teacher's editions for ways that the curriculum addresses the standards. The unit is designed using the Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Frameworks for California Public Schools, one District's adopted curriculum, and basic art supplies in order to make the project a viable tool that a teacher at any grade level could use and adapt in any school district.

Chapter Four presents a unit prototype of instruction that manifests the key components of the literature

review. Essential understandings and skills have been identified to meet the content standards. Activities are based on the use of Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English and cooperative groups.

Chapter Five is a summary of the project and recommendations on how to appropriate the ideas in the project for different areas of study and grade levels.

Significance of the Project

Graves (1995) states "that we are the best teachers when we are teaching on the edge of what we are currently learning" (Hubbard & Ernst, 1996, p. xi). That is what this project is doing. I know *nothing* about art, except what was learned by observing 12 one-hour sessions with a visual artist-in-residence that came to work with students in my class. Even then, I did not see art's potential for three more years.

This project is an effort to meet the needs of English Language Learners, as well as English only students, in order to bring out their creativity, facilitate them in constructing their own knowledge, and help them to grow and develop both in literacy and imagination beyond the bounds of the ordinary.

Definition of Terms

This project requires the use of specific terms that are defined below. Unless otherwise note, the definitions are from Schooling and Language Minority Students: A theoretical Framework (2^{nd} ed.)(1994).

- Affective Filter - a construct developed to refer to the effects of personality, motivation, and other affective variables on second language acquisition. These variables interact with each other and with other factors to raise or lower the affective filter. It is hypothesized that when the filter is "high," the L_2 acquirer is not able to adequately process "comprehensible input."
- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills - (BICS) a construct originally developed by James Cummins to refer to aspects of language proficiency strongly associated with the basic communicative fluency achieved by all normal native speakers of a language. Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills are not highly correlated with literacy and academic achievement. Cummins has further refined this notion in terms of "cognitively undemanding contextualized" language.

- Bilingual Education Program - an organized curriculum that includes: (1) L_1 development, (2) L_2 acquisition, and (3) subject matter development through L_1 and L_2. Bilingual programs are organized so that participating students may attain a level of proficient bilingualism.
- Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency - (CALP) a construct originally proposed by James Cummins to refer to aspects of language proficiency strongly related to literacy and academic achievement. Cummins has further refined this notion in terms of "cognitively demanding decontextualized" language.
- Comprehensible Second Language Input - a construct developed to describe understandable and meaningful language directed at L_2 acquirers under optimal conditions. Comprehensible L_2 input is characterized as language which the L_2 acquirer already knows (i) plus a range of new language (i + 1), which is made comprehensible in formal schooling contexts by the use of certain planned strategies.
- English Language Arts - ELA (California Department of Education)

- English Language Development - ELD (California Department of Education)
- English Language Learner - (ELL) any student who has a language other than English as her/his primary language; plural - ELLs
- KWL - acronym used for learning charts allowing students to list information: what I know (K), what I want to know (W), what I learned (L)
- Monitor - a construct developed to refer to the mechanism by which L_2 learners process, store, and retrieve conscious language rules. Conscious rules are placed in the Monitor as a result of language learning. In order to effectively use the Monitor, L_2 users must: (1) have sufficient time to retrieve the desired rule, (2) be involved in a task focused on language forms and not on language functions, and (3) have previously learned correctly and stored the rule. These three conditions are rarely present in normal day-to-day conversational contexts.
- 90/90/90 Schools - schools identified by Reeves (2004) as having the following characteristics

- More than 90 percent of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunch, a commonly used surrogate for low-income families.
- More than 90 percent of the students are from ethnic minorities
- More than 90 percent of the students met or achieved high academic standards, according to independently conducted tests of academic achievement.

- Primary Language - L_1, the primary or first language a child learns to speak
- Second Language - L_2, the second language a child learns to speak
- Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English - (SDAIE) term used to describe academic content instruction; it is grade level matter in English specifically designed for speakers of other languages; rigorous academic core content at the student's grade level (Sobul, 1995, pp. 1-2)
- Sheltered Instruction - instruction meant to be the bridge between primary language and English only instruction in content areas for students at the

intermediate or above level of proficiency in English (Sobul, 1995, p. 1)

- Zone of Proximal Development - ZOPD as defined by Vygotsky as the distance between the child's actual developmental level and her potential developmental level as seen when a child is solving problems in interaction with an adult or more capable peer (Garton, 1992, p. 95)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Art in the classroom can be used as a mediated structure and/or tool to build the descriptive vocabulary and background knowledge necessary for English Language Learners to be successful in writing in their second language. It allows students to build a foundation for descriptive, detailed language necessary to show, not tell, the reader what the message is in their writing. Using art as a non-verbal language to demonstrate knowledge allows students to feel empowered to share their ideas in a non-threatening manner while building the communicative and academic language they need to be successful in written language.

All English Learners (ELLs) do not begin at the same place in their literacy skills. One classroom may have students who were born and raised in the United States yet come to school speaking little or no English. Other students may be new arrivals from another country that might or might not be a literate society. Echevarria and Short (2000) concur stating "all English Language Learners in U.S. schools today are not alike. They enter U.S.

schools with a wide range of language proficiencies (in English and in their native languages) and of subject matter knowledge" (p. 3). They continue to point out

> we also have students who have grown up in the United States but speak a language other than English at home...They have never mastered English or the home language and may be caught in a state of semi literacy that is hard to escape. (p. 4)

As this is the case for many U.S. schools, instructional strategies and knowledge of how children come to know language and become literate is essential for today's teachers. The review of literature will examine Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, second language acquisition theory, literacy development for ELLs, instructional strategies, and art education.

Vygotsky - Sociocultural Theory

According to Vygotsky, social interaction is essential to the development of speech especially in the course of problem solving. He emphasizes that "in the course of solving a problem with another person, a child must communicate with that person" (Garton, 1992, p. 94). In the classroom, the other person would be the teacher or

a peer. In the area of vocabulary development and writing, students need to communicate their ideas to each other and the reader. When working collaboratively with the teacher or a peer during the writing process, students must negotiate meaning with the other person. By using art as a mediated structure "social interaction facilitates word meaning in children since they construct meaning from understanding the speech of others" (Garton, 1992, p. 93). Thus, mediated structure is essential for the English Language Learner. One cannot write about what one does not know. Through collaboration with teachers and peers in social settings, teachers and peers can use facial gestures, body language, and pictures or drawings to help the ELL student understand the concept being discussed (Cummins, p. 9).

This negotiation of meaning is conducted in a social context that Vygotsky calls the "'zone of proximal development' which is defined as the distance between the child's actual developmental level...and her potential developmental level, as seen when a child is solving problems in interaction with 'an adult or more capable peer'" (Garton, 1992, p. 95). The zone of proximal development (ZOPD) is not static. For the English Language Learner, the ZOPD, is continually changing as more

vocabulary and concepts are internalized and learned. Vygotsky (1978) and others (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988 as cited by Echivarria & Short, 2000), state "students' language learning is promoted through social interaction and contextualized communication, which can be readily generated in all subject areas" (p. 6). The effective teacher therefore should continually plan, teach, monitor, and adjust to the potential of the ELL. Classrooms that are managed with strict no talking rules or focus only on individual work rather than collaboration and social interaction will not be effective for the ELL student.

Theories of Language Acquisition

Acquiring a language, especially a second language (L_2), in the mainstream classroom for ELLs can be significantly more difficult than is necessary. Often this difficulty stems from a lack of understanding for some teachers of how children acquire language, or if they know the theories, they do not put the ideas of how children acquire language into practice. Most academic tasks require students to have a firm grasp of the majority language, in this case English. Several theories of language acquisition have been postulated, however they

all seem to share one key characteristic. The English Language Learner must receive comprehensible input.

Cummins (1994) maintains that educators often have two misconceptions. First, it is often assumed that students cannot think logically if they cannot speak standard English. He uses the Common Underlying Proficiency model (CUP) of language acquisition to dispute this idea. Second, educators base many decisions, in and out of the classroom, on the student's conversational ability in English, assuming a proficiency that does not exist. Cummins explains the error of this thinking using the terms basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (pp. 5-6).

The first misconception that ELLs cannot think logically implies that students who are fluent in their primary language (L_1), but cannot speak English, have no cognitive abilities in the second language (L_2).

Cummins (1994) explains this misinformation using the Separate Underlying Proficiency model (SUP) and the Common Underlying Proficiency model (CUP). If the SUP model is the case for ELLs, any knowledge or skill students have in L_1 would not transfer to L_2. Literacy in L_1 would be useless in the classroom where English is the only

language used. The SUP model proposes that the two languages are independent of each other. A simple concept such as what a book is or requests to use the restroom would be an entirely new experience for the ELL and would need to be retaught in L_2 (p. 17).

The CUP model puts forward a more realistic viewpoint, in that, L_1 and L_2 share a common underlying area. Cummins (1994) explains this model by using a dual iceberg. In this model, each language has its own surface differences "(e.g., pronunciation, fluency)" (p. 19), however below the surface of the iceberg there are common characteristics that are interdependent between the two languages. For example, "a child who knows how to write sentences and paragraphs in Spanish doesn't have to learn what sentences and paragraphs are all over again in English" (p. 21). Krashen (1997) concurs with this view when he states "those who read well in one language, read well in the second language" (p. 2). The CUP model therefore is logically sound and a useful model for teachers to use when considering the academic needs and direction of teaching ELL students.

The second misconception teachers have is using oral language proficiency as a determinate factor in assuming that students are fluent enough to understand and master

the curriculum in English. Cummins suggests that language proficiency has two levels. The first is conversational language that can be acquired in as little as two years. He refers to this level of proficiency as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). This is the language that is necessary for English Learners to play on the playground, eat lunch and have discussions with peers in the cafeteria, and share dialogues with the teacher and peers in the classroom. The second level of proficiency is referred to as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). This level of language proficiency would allow students to access and discuss academic material and use academic language in the classroom. Cummins (1994) "report[s] that five to seven years were required for immigrant students from non-English-speaking backgrounds to catch up academically in English proficiency" (p. 12).

It is the first level of proficiency that many teachers use to base the delivery of classroom instruction. Assuming that the English Language Learner students can converse on the playground and with friends in the classroom, some teachers see no need to differentiate or modify academic material to make it comprehensible to the English Language Learner.

In later studies, Cummins (1994) made a "distinction between contextualized and decontextualized language" and put it "into a framework that distinguished the cognitive and contextual demands made by particular forms of communication" (p. 10). This framework explains many of the academic difficulties English Language Learners have in achieving or mastering grade level standards established by the state and/or districts. Context-embedded conversations are generally face-to-face and offer visual cues and body language to the speakers as they negotiate meaning of the context. For example, it would be considered cognitively undemanding for English Learners who are playing on the playground in a social situation where students interact. Context-reduced and cognitively demanding would be found in a classroom setting during direct instruction of Science, for example, when the teacher is using academic language regarding abstract ideas. There may be few visual cues and the vocabulary is not part of a child's social vocabulary. Cummins (1999) states "there are clear differences in acquisition and developmental patterns between conversational language and academic language" (p. 3). When teachers assume students understand the content areas based on their oral communication skills, they fail to

realize the cognitively demanding tasks the students are being asked to complete, especially when these tasks are to be completed independently.

Krashen (1994) discusses second language acquisition with the use of five hypotheses: acquisition-learning hypothesis, natural order hypothesis, monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis. The acquisition-learning hypothesis states "acquisition is picking up a language" (p. 52) and "learning include[s] grammar and rules" (p. 52). The natural order hypothesis states that "students acquire (not learn) grammatical structures in a predictable order" (p. 52), however this should not be used as a map for teaching students grammar rules. The monitor hypothesis states the "relationship between acquisition and learning" (p. 53) of a language. As s/he acquires more of L_2, the ELL monitors the conscious learning and the output of speech or writing making necessary corrections in grammar. The Input Hypothesis states "we acquire (not learn) language by understanding input that contains structures that are just beyond our current level of competence (i + 1)" (p. 57). This hypothesis has similarities to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development in that you begin at the ELL's level of development and move a bit beyond in order to promote

acquisition. The affective filter hypothesis takes into account anxiety level, motivation to acquire the language, and self-confidence of the ELL (pp. 57-58). The lower the anxiety level the easier it is to acquire the language. Translated to the classroom this hypothesis demonstrates the need for ELLs to feel safe in trying out their new language and for all attempts at production to be accepted without fear of grammar or pronunciation corrections.

Krashen's, (1994) Input Hypothesis illustrates the need to contextualize the information teachers deliver to ELL students in the acquisition of language. If a teacher does not adjust the demanding context of student texts to make it more comprehensible, then the ELL is not acquiring or learning the concepts or acquiring the language. Even with discussions or verbal explanations, the teacher's speech is nothing more than noise if the information being delivered is not comprehensible. Krashen proposes "there is a tremendous difference between receiving comprehensible, meaningful input and simply hearing a language one does not understand" (p. 62). Other components of the Input Hypothesis are that speech emerges after a silent period, is not taught directly, and grammatical structures do not need to be imbedded into the input.

One implication in the classroom for this hypothesis is that teachers should not assume that students who do not raise their hands to answer questions or join in class discussions are not thinking if the input has been comprehensible. They may simply be in a silent period. Another implication is that assignments such as drill and practice of skills in the classroom or direct instruction of grammar rules will be ineffective especially for the ELL who does not yet have BICS.

In order for educators to serve the English Language Learners in the classroom, theories of language acquisition should be kept in the forefront of the mind. Special care must be taken to review the curriculum and determine what the essential understandings are to be taught. Educators must then plan, teach, assess, and reflect on the curriculum to determine if they are meeting the goal of language acquisition.

Instructional Strategies

There are numerous instructional strategies that can be used with ELL students. The review will focus primarily on sheltered instruction/Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and cooperative groups. In keeping with the plan, teach, assess, and reflect model of

addressing the standards in the content area, educators must use the assessments for ELLs to guide and drive instruction. If the ELL student was not successful on an assessment, rather than the teacher looking toward the student as having a deficiency in the acquisition of language or content, the informed educator looks toward oneself and asks, what strategy or strategies can be used next time to make the information more comprehensible to the student?

Zehler (1994) proposes that "often school texts assume a common experience that, in fact, is not shared by all students: ELLs may not fully understand these texts and, consequently, will be less likely to remember the content material" (p. 2). One strategy used to make information more comprehensible for ELLs is sheltered instruction sometimes referred to as SDAIE (specially designed academic instruction in English).

Echivarria and Short (2000) identify sheltered instruction as "an approach for teaching content to English language learners in strategic ways that make the subject matter concepts comprehensible while promoting the students' English language development" (p. 2). Krashen originally used the term, sheltered instruction, to refer to content classes designed for ELLs to be "the bridge

between primary language and English only instruction in content area classrooms" (Sobul, 1995, p. 1). Sheltered instruction classrooms were intended to meet the needs of ELL students who were at the intermediate level of language proficiency.

According to Sobul (1995), "sheltered classes have become submersion content classes where students with limited English proficiencies either 'sink or swim.'...The content is in fact 'watered down'" (p. 1). This has often been a criticism of sheltered instruction classes. For sheltered instruction to be effective, it must be more than simply adding a few pictures or visuals into a lesson to get the concept across to ELL students. Sheltered instruction should be a well thought out plan that gives ELL students access to the core curriculum and promotes language acquisition at the same time. Zehler (1994) points out "there must be opportunities provided for ELL students to work with challenging tasks" (p. 4).

Echivarria and Short (2000) note that sheltered instruction is not "simply a set of additional or replacement instructional techniques...the sheltered approach draws from and complements methods and strategies advocated for both second language and mainstream classrooms" (p. 4). They further clarify that

> sheltered instruction brings together *what to teach* by providing an approach for *how to teach* it. The model offers a framework for selecting and organizing techniques and strategies and facilitates the integration of district or state level standards for English as a second language and for specific content areas (p. 10).

In order to get away from the idea of a watered down curriculum and keep the essential understandings in focus, as teachers adapt curriculum to be comprehensible, another essential question that should be uppermost in the mind is whether or not the rigor of the curriculum is being maintained. In keeping with this idea, Sobul (1995) explains

> SDAIE is the term now used to describe academic content instruction....SDAIE is grade-level subject matter in English specifically designed for speakers of other languages. It is rigorous academic core content required at the student's grade level; it is not watered down curriculum (pp. 1-2).

In order to modify the curriculum and maintain its rigor, teachers need to know and understand the key essential understandings of the content standards. It is necessary

to determine what prerequisite knowledge and skills the students will need to master content. Once this has been established, then teachers can decide what methodology would best give the ELL comprehensible input and facilitate making meaning out of the text.

Kagan (1995) and Sobul (1995) maintain that cooperative learning groups are of primary importance in delivering comprehensible input, comprehensible output, and allowing for redundancy to promote language acquisition and access to the content in SDAIE classrooms. Sobul (1995) includes expressive writing in the context of cooperatives groups as students use quick writes, journals, and other methods of writing to clarify content areas and encourage further "collaborative construction of meaning" (p. 4).

Both agree that Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development is effectively manifested in cooperative groups. Sobul (1995) states "crucial to SDAIE instructional methodologies is Vygotsky's fundamental notion that learning is social in nature, thus, it must involve collaborative and cooperative learning as well as scaffolding" (abstract). Scaffolding is explained as taking the student from where s/he is toward an independent level (p. 3). In essence, this view of

scaffolding is similar in structure to Vygotsky's ZOPD and Krashen's i + 1.

Kagan (1995) documents research that students who are low to medium achievers benefit the most from cooperative group methods and "deficienc[ies] in basic language skills can be overcome by transforming the social organization of the classroom" (p. 246). This research has great significance for the ELL student. Since many ELL students are considered low achieving or at risk, effective teachers would want to use every tool at their disposal to increase students achievement.

Kagan (1995) describes a number of ways that make cooperative classrooms beneficial for the ELL over traditional classrooms. In the traditional classroom the teacher is the primary speaker with limited discourse happening between individual students. According to Kagan, the theoretical reason that cooperative classrooms work is due to the fact that "the amount of comprehensible input, complexity of input, amount of comprehensible output, frequency and type of practice, clarity of task structure, subdivision of learning unit, and time-on-task" (p. 253) is greatly increased. He discusses several methods of using cooperative learning groups with students.

Thus, according to Kagan (1995) the nature of cooperative groups allows for a higher level of cognitive development. They allow ELL students to immediately let group members know when they do not understand and need clarification. Sobul (1995) states "within the collaborative group, expressive talk is cyclical, it provides and promotes feedback" (p. 4). For the ELL to acquire language, the negotiation of meaning and instant feedback is essential.

Writing Literacy

As writers, we cannot be very descriptive or write about what we do not know. For students to become writers, they must have something authentic to write about. Students need an opportunity to tell about the who, what, when, where, why, and how of their lives. That includes in the area of academia. Bello (1997) cites

> Nobel Prize-winning author Nadine Gordimer (1982) has said that all great writing is deeply personal and heartfelt. Teachers need to provide learners with opportunities to write about topics that are relevant to their lives, to participate in various writing activities, and to feel that their writing has value. By

> integrating writing with content at every level of instruction, teachers help learners find their own voices in their new language and develop the ability to communicate effectively in different contexts and with different audiences (p. 3).

This concept is a valuable source for the teacher of ELL students. If our ELL students are going to become proficient beyond BICS, then they must have the opportunity to write across the curriculum. Personal narratives are important and a valuable teaching tool to build reading and writing literacy, however, the area of greatest struggles for some ELL students is in areas such as social studies, science, and mathematics. We must also teach our students how to write about expository texts and interact with the text in a way that is meaningful to them in order for them to develop higher levels of CALP.

Shamway (1992) points out that "...children acquiring English are capable of much more than is generally expected of them (p. 2). Students can do more than complete simple worksheets on vocabulary from their expository text. Research has shown that 90/90/90 schools have an emphasis on writing across the curriculum. A rubric is established and writing in all areas is

evaluated with it sending the students the message that "...*this* is the standard for good writing, and there are no compromises on these expectations for quality" (Reeves, 2004, p. 190). Reeves states that

> the benefits of such an emphasis on writing appear to be two-fold. First, students process information in a much clearer way when they are required to write an answer. They 'write to think' and, thus, gain the opportunity to clarify their own thought processes. Second, teachers have the opportunity to gain rich and complex diagnostic information about why students respond to an academic challenge the way that they do (p. 190).

Given numerous opportunities to write, no matter the level of English language proficiency, and tools such as writer's workshop, cooperative groups, discussions, and the mediated structure of art, ELL students can demonstrate the significant amount of knowledge that they possess and teachers can gather the information they need to guide further instruction.

Shamway states "writing is an active, personal, theory-building, theory-testing process that facilitates the making of meaning" (p. 2). Writers from all walks of

life continually rewrite, investigate, analyze, rethink, and write again as they complete a project. The same is true for ELL students who are writing. Writing is not static: it is constantly changing. Students should be taught to discuss their writing progress and process with peers, teachers, and parents as they evaluate their stories and projects. This is not to say that every piece of writing must or should go through the writing process from prewriting to revision. However, ELL writers negotiate meaning and construct knowledge as they revisit their ideas and concepts over and over in the process of writing.

Bello (1997) explains that

> writing also enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences, and larger chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary they are learning in class (p. 1).

For the grammar and vocabulary to be effective it should be a natural production of students' writing. If in social studies students work on a group project about the Native Americans and investigate the past, present, and future of this group of people, this is a perfect way to have

students practice the use of verb tense at their own level of proficiency.

Some might argue that students cannot write until they have some vocabulary or proficiency in English. Samway would dispute this. She states

> children acquiring English develop as writers in idiosyncratic ways (e.g., Hudelson, 1989; Samway, 1987a; Urza, 1987). Some children are more fluent speakers, while others are more proficient writers. It is clear that sophisticated oral language development is not necessary for children acquiring English to successfully communicate their thought and experiences in writing (p. 3).

As teachers we often draw pictures or use diagrams to get our ideas across to students or to explain a complicated process. ELLs can and often do the same thing in their writing "by using symbols to express complex thoughts" (p. 3). Using symbols to create meaning and exchange complex ideas can be seen in children as young as kindergarten (Flores, 1990). What the effective teacher should do with this writing, whether it is symbols, pictures, letters, words, or sentences, is to meet the child where he/she is at (the zone of proximal

development), and use the ELL's writing as the mediated structure to move to the next level of written and oral proficiency. If we only meet ELL students, or any student, at the developmental level they are at, that is where they will stay. We must teach to their potential and allow them to expand and explore their world, even in writing (Diaz & Flores, 2001).

Visual Art and Literacy

Art is a mediated structure and tool that teachers of ELL students can use to facilitate the learning of content area curriculum, especially in the area of writing across the curriculum. Gardner (2003) quotes Rochelle I. Frei (1999) who states that art

> can be used the same way as written text can to expand children's knowledge of the world, and to understand what children do when they make sense of that world. ...Art can provide a window into how children negotiate their understandings of images and their knowledge of the word (p. 386) (p. 1).

Frei's statement corresponds with the California Department of Education's task force on art report that states, first, "art education helps students develop a

wide range of skills that they can use in many disciplines" (p. 1). Second, the report cited Howard Gardner's work at Harvard University, which "showed that instruction in the arts is one of the best ways in which to involve the different modes of learning" (p. 5). All students, ELL, or English only, learn in different ways. Using art helps teachers and students to address the learning modalities that are best suited for the students to comprehend and attain the curriculum.

For many teachers art is seen as the 'fluff' of the classroom curriculum. It is a special project done around the holidays. Hubbard and Ernst (1996) state

> drawing and image making have been separate from the regular curriculum, treated more as a decoration than as tools for exploring the world and ourselves. But when images and words work together to create meaning, literacy's potential expands (p. xi).

Using art in the classroom allows students to be creative and use imagination in telling their stories. Often children have so much more to say than they can at first describe in words but as they draw, paint, or create their picture they can add much more than their vocabulary at first allows.

Through group discussion with peers and teachers, ELL students can explain their thinking and construct knowledge through cognitively challenging discussions as they negotiate the meaning of what they see in their picture and what they are attempting to say with them. Witherbourne (1996) discusses how

> the artists workshop provides opportunities for children to express their rich use of written language: complex verb forms, descriptors, and specialized vocabulary....The workshop structure encourages flexible thinking, analysis, and change (p. 37).

Using art as a means to develop students' descriptive vocabulary and teach academic function words is the essence of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.

Children's zone of proximal development continually expands as they meet with peers to discuss their thoughts and ideas. Ernst (1996) points out "doors open for both teacher and student as we collaborate, copy, exchange ideas, and change what happens in the workshop based on what we learn" (p. 24). As teacher and peers ask for clarification about a story or ask for more details, children are challenged to think about their thinking. They develop metacognition in the process of making

meaning. Written word becomes attached to the visual word through the processes of art and writing.

Teachers of ELLs who use art with writing give students the means for communicating their ideas until their spoken vocabulary, language proficiency in both BICS and CALP, can catch up with what they know and want to express. Swisher's (1994) study (as cited by Milkow-Porto, 1998) explains,

> all students - but especially at-risk students - may be more successful as learners when using learning-style strengths. Instruction in the arts that is developmentally appropriate addresses the entire spectrum of the senses including the kinesthetic, auditory, and visual (p. 5).

Much can be learned from looking at a child's picture. Hubbard (1996) states "visual expression is a human capacity possessed by *everyone*" (p. xii) which includes ELL students. Art knows no boundaries. It is a language all its own that we all share and can use to communicate. Children's artwork gives us a window into their thought processes and allows us opportunities to take advantage of the teachable moment.

Art in the writer's workshop is not, nor should it be, limited to narrative text. Using art in the areas of mathematics, science, and social studies is of tremendous benefit. As children investigate a topic and discover information, they can use symbols, diagrams, paintings, collages and more to develop their own visuals and make meanings for themselves by what they create to make the information comprehensible to themselves. Using art with written language does not mean that skills are abandoned. They are included in the discussion, used in context, and explored through dialogue with each other. While teaching vocabulary, teachers "need to give students experience not just in memorizing words and their meanings, but in synthesizing, analyzing, and interacting with words" (Kimbro, 2000, p. 2). When students are studying about the past, and how it relates to us today, is the perfect opportunity to explore verb tense. When teaching voice and audience in writing, narrative and expository, children should be taught to listen to their own voice in the telling of their information, how do they sound as they tell the story or give the information. This is Vygotsky's, Cummins', and Krashen's ideas of social learning, comprehensible input, and low affective filter at its best.

Just as there are content standards for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, there are also content standards for Art. These standards cannot be taught in isolation, especially for the English Language Learner. Concepts from each curricular area can be woven into another. For example, the idea of shape and line fits well with Mathematics. Rhythm and movement are part of all curricular areas: poetry in reading and writing, movement of people in social studies, movement of plants, animals, space figures in science, and patterns in mathematics. This names only a very few areas that ideas can exchange across curriculum. Students need to compare and contrast these ideas across curriculum and use the vocabulary of art as part of the vocabulary they use in all areas of their life. As we mediate the structures of our students' learning using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Cummins' and Krashen's language acquisition theory, the teaching strategies of SDAIE and cooperative groups, through art and writing, we allow children to acknowledge, revise, and add to the making of meaning in their worlds. Our world is a kaleidoscope of shape, color, and textures - we need to share, teach, and enjoy our world with our English Language Learners so that they too can go out into the world to share, teach, and enjoy.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN OF CURRICULUM

The goal of this project is to design a prototype for a content standards-based curriculum using art as the mediated structure to enhance descriptive writing for third grade English Language Learners (ELLs). The design of the curriculum is created to be meaningful and allow for comprehensible input. Chapter Two reviewed how ELLs acquire language in a social context through interaction with a more experienced person. It explained how students experience language and negotiate meaning through cooperative groups. Specially designed academic instruction is one vehicle that can be used to be sure that content is made comprehensible for ELLs. The lessons in this unit are not meant to be inclusive of all the content standards that can be taught with a theme but merely a sampling of ideas of how to integrate writing across the curriculum and enhance descriptive language. Research demonstrates that students who write across the curriculum have much higher cognitive gains and access to the curriculum by providing the structure and time to think, analyze, and synthesize new information.

The lessons are not designed in the traditional sense that one lesson uses one block of time in one day. The lessons are designed to teach a concept or idea over a time period (be it a day, week, or more) to develop true understanding for the ELL student. The intent is for the ELL students, their questions, and involvement to be the determining factor in how much or little time is needed to develop understanding of the concepts. Several content standards across the curriculum are addressed throughout the unit and within lessons. Continuing with the plan, teach, assess and reflect model mentioned in Chapter One, there is a thematic unit overview, pre-assessment, lesson, post-assessment, and reflection log for student and teacher in each lesson contained in the unit. A reflection worksheet for the planning of the unit using SDAIE strategies is also included. The unit overview demonstrates the unlimited potential for lessons.

Components

The lessons have the following components: identify the standards, pre-assess, objectives, materials, get set/ build background knowledge, vocabulary, modeling, establish cooperative groups, practice, closure, and assessments. Writing is scored using a third grade writing

rubric (Smith & Valdes, 2005, p. 7). There are also areas for reflection for students and teacher. Four lessons are explained in detail.

Format of Lessons

The formats of the lesson plans do not follow a traditional plan intentionally. Each lesson has a content vocabulary list and a functional vocabulary list to be introduced to students. The content vocabulary is academic terms specific to a given subject (e.g., narrative, topic sentence, adjective, etc.). The functional vocabulary is words needed for the student to understand directions and complete the required task (e.g., list, sketch, record, etc.). It is expected that the vocabulary will be introduced at the beginning of the lesson, but more importantly continually revisited during conversations throughout the lessons using the words in an authentic context. Functional words are especially important for ELLs to be successful on academic tasks. It is often not the case that ELLs do not understand the concepts they are being asked to discuss or write about, but that they do not understand the functional words telling them what to do on the assignment. Modeling is separated from the practice session in order to point out that modeling is

crucial in SDAIE. The practice section of the plans is not meant to be accomplished in one setting. It is a process over time.

Lesson One lists all of the standards that are touched on throughout the lesson for English Language Development, English Language Arts, and Art. The purpose of this is not to say that each standard was taught, and certainly not to depth, but to demonstrate how many standards from across the curriculum can be incorporated with one lesson. The teacher can then choose which standards are the most important and have enduring, life long use for the ELL student. It should be noted that, whenever possible, teachers should incorporate vocabulary from other content areas into lessons whenever appropriate. This is not the time to explain all of the vocabulary explicitly but often offers opportunities to use the words in a context that is meaningful for ELLs. The focus in Lesson One is on two essential content standards: writing a paragraph; and writing a personal narrative including concrete sensory details.

Lesson Two lists the English Language Development (ELD) standards for all proficiency levels, English Language Arts (ELA) focus standards, and Art standards. All of the ELD standards are attached to remind teachers

that there are specific standards within the ELA standards that ELLs are held accountable for at *their* proficiency level. The focus standards for this lesson are the same as in lesson one however with the component of revision being added.

Keeping in mind that children cannot write about what they do not know, Lesson Three uses art and science to build the background knowledge for students to write an expository paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting details on the structure and function of leaves in the science curriculum.

Lesson Four uses the art project and information records students completed in the previous lesson to revise drafts of their expository paragraphs and build on the knowledge of how to write a paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting details. Students' drafts are used as the springboard for identifying topic sentences, fact/detail sentences, and explanation/example sentences. Working in cooperative groups, each group member's paragraph is analyzed and types of sentences (topic, fact/detail, example/explanation) are identified. This gives the students the opportunity to use the academic language repeatedly and time to negotiate meaning and clarify misconceptions. The observation record sheet from

Lesson Three is used to add more concrete sensory details. The thesaurus is also introduced to show students another source for finding descriptive words. Students then revise their expository paragraph submitting a final draft as a summative evaluation.

In summary, these are the essential components guiding a prototype of thematic teaching that encompasses the standards and all content areas. Making information comprehensible in a sheltered manner allows the English Language Learner to make connections between content areas, to develop CALP, and to develop higher order thinking skills necessary not only in the academic world, but in the world in general. It is hoped that the project engages the reader to delve deeper into the possibilities of meeting our ELL students' needs through a sociocultural context of an integrated curriculum.

CHAPTER FOUR

PAINTING WITH WORDS

A visual unit overview (see Figure 1), a narrative unit overview, focus standards addressed, and four sample units are included in this chapter. The focus of the unit is to use art as a mediated structure and tool to enhance written language among English Language Learners in third grade. Instructional strategies such as think, pair, share, cooperative groups, and SDAIE are used throughout the development of the lesson. Some elements of a lesson may appear to be redundant, however this was done intentionally to allow the ELL to continually revisit the language and have multiple opportunities to build comprehension in the mediated structures of cooperative groups and art. Cummins (1994) and Krashen (1994) have stated that it is through the redundancy of the language that children come to know what words mean and own them. In order to do this, lessons have been developed within the content areas of: Art, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Focus standards are those standards that are taught to depth.

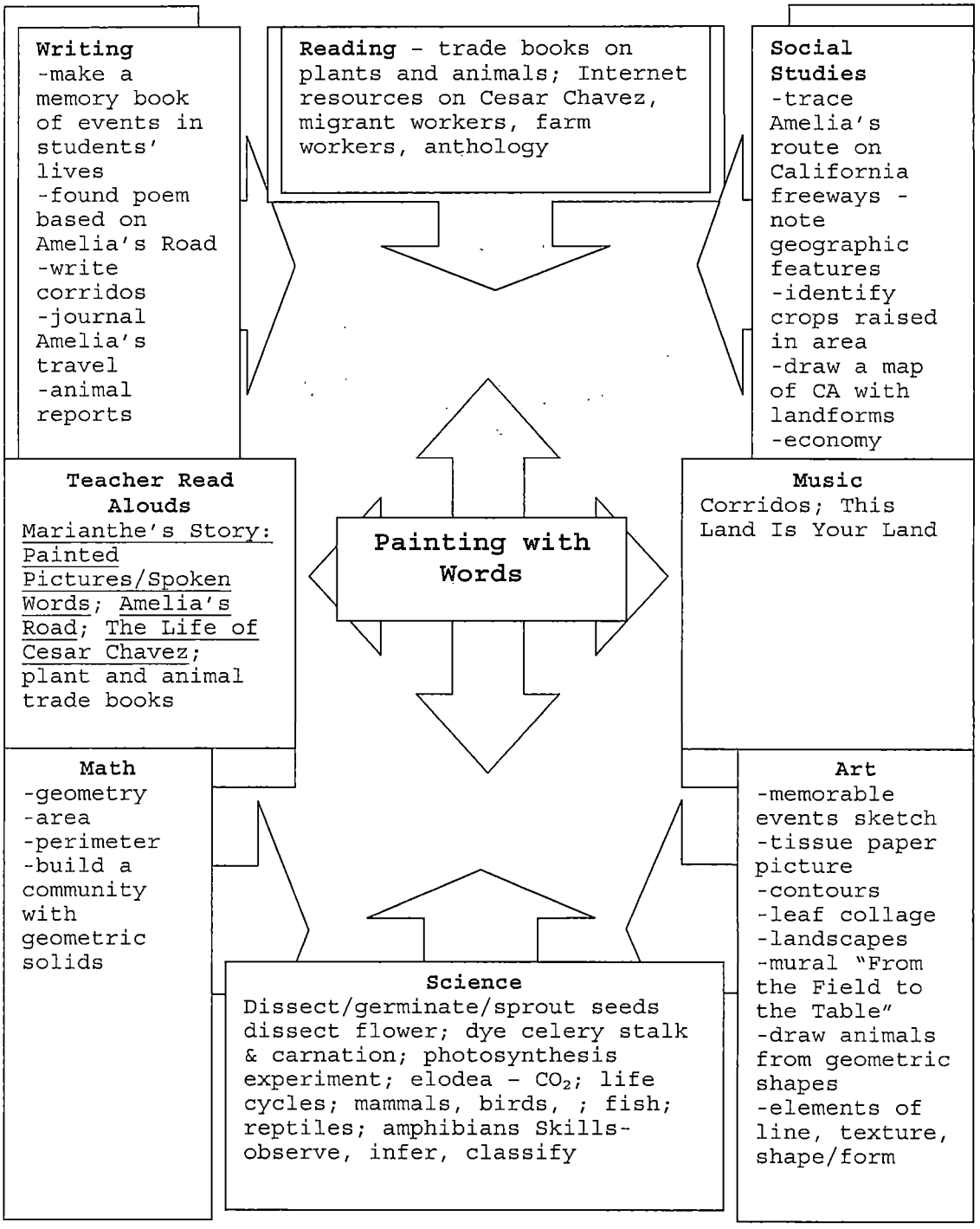


Figure 1. Visual Unit Overview

Narrative Unit Overview

The unit has literacy skills, especially narrative and expository writing, intertwined within all activities. All conceptual understandings in all curricular areas will be preceded by the mediated structure of art. Students will work in cooperative groups, partners, and as individuals. Unless it is a group project, assessments will be done individually. After all discussions, lessons, and activities, students will write a quick-write in a journal to monitor their own understanding and progress and allow think-time to construct meaning. The teacher should read and analyze these journals to consistently monitor and assess students' needs in order to guide the instruction.

The unit will open with a teacher-read-aloud, Marianthe's Story: Painted Memories/Spoken Words. This story introduces students to the concept of telling a story or giving information through the mediated structure of art without using words since the character telling the story does not at first speak English. Two lessons will follow this read-aloud: Lesson One, Looking for the Story in Art, and Lesson Two, Memorable Details: Narrative Writing. Elements of line, texture, shape/form, and design of foreground, middle ground, and background will be

included in this area of the unit. These art concepts will be related to all literature and literacy events, especially writing, as they relate to concepts such as beginning, middle, and end of narratives, concrete sensory details and descriptive language, and places of events as the unit progresses.

The teacher-read-aloud, Amelia's Road, will follow and be the springboard for Lesson Three, Contouring and Classifying Leaf Structures, and Lesson Four, Structures and Functions of Leaves: Expository Writing. The main character in the story and her family are migrant workers. The story describes her journey from place-to-place in California as she and her family follow seasonal crops. The character wants to stay in one place and cries every time her father takes out a map. These lessons will cover the cross-curricular areas of Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Mapping skills, geographic landforms, economics, and famous historical heroes in Social Studies will be accessed through the story as students identify where the crops are located that the character's family harvest. The life of Cesar Chavez and other important farm workers, their contributions to society, and how one person can make a difference to the lives of many will be explored.

Corridos from the life of Cesar Chavez and his time period will be explored and students will work together to write a class corrido.

In Life Science, plants and animals and their structures and functions will be taught as students investigate why crops that the character and her family harvest are located in different geographic locations. Students will create still-life paintings of plants, including fruits and vegetables as the mediated structure for learning structures and functions of plants.

In Mathematics, geometry and measurement will be introduced through the story as students create artwork such as maps, landscapes, cityscapes, and build and design communities.

After having revisited the story several times throughout the course of study, students will create a "found poem" as one of the culminating activities. Working in cooperative groups, students will discuss the language use of the author, highlighting the descriptive language that tells the character's story. Students will choose 10, three to six word phrases from the literature that they feel best describes and tells the character's story. They will then arrange the phrases in an order that has the

most significant meaning to the student. Students' poems will then be published in a class book.

As a culminating class project, involving all curricular areas, students will create a mural entitled "From the Field to the Table" in which they use many of the elements of art and analyze and synthesize the information they have learned throughout the unit to produce a mural that tells a story through painting.

Individual culminating projects will consist of four writing assignments. The first assignment will be an illustrated memory book of the students lives written in narrative form. The second assignment will be expository writing about a famous historical person. For the third assignment students will write an informational book in the form of expository writing about plants and animals including illustrations of different habitats and environments. Finally, for the fourth assignment students will review their journals and write about what made the most meaning and had the most significance for them throughout the unit.

Focus Standards for the Unit

Language Arts

- Writing strategies
  - Create a single paragraph
    - Develop a topic sentence
    - Include simple supporting facts and details
  - Understand the structure and organization of various reference materials (e.g., thesaurus, atlas)
  - Revise drafts to improve the coherence and logical progression of ideas by using an established rubric
- Writing Applications
  - Write narratives
    - Provide a context within which an action takes place
    - Include well-chosen details to develop the plot
    - Provide insight
  - Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details to present and support unified impressions of people, places, things, or experiences
- Reading Word analysis, fluency, and systematic Vocabulary Development

- Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression
- Demonstrate knowledge of levels of specificity among grade-appropriate words and explain the importance of these relations (e.g., dog/mammal, animal/living things)

- Reading comprehension
  - Ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information found in, and inferred from, the text
  - Distinguish the main idea and supporting details in expository text
- Reading Literary Response and Analysis
  - Distinguish between the structural features of the text and literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, plot, setting, characters)
  - Distinguish common forms of literature (e.g., fiction, nonfiction)
- Written and Oral English Language Conventions
  - Understand and be able to use complete and correct declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in writing and speaking

- Identify and use past, present, and future verb tenses properly in writing and speaking
- Capitalize geographical names

Mathematics

- Measurement and Geometry
  - Identify, describe, and classify polygons (including pentagons, hexagons, and octagons
  - Identify attributes of triangles
  - Identify attributes of quadrilaterals
  - Identify common solid objects that are the components needed to make a more complex solid object

Science

- Life Sciences
  - Know plants and animals have structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction
  - Know examples of diverse life forms in different environments, such as ocean, deserts, tundra, forests, grasslands, and wetlands

Social Studies

- Continuity and Change
  - Identify geographical features in their local region (e.g., deserts, mountains, valleys, hills, coastal areas, oceans, lakes)
  - Describe the lives of American heroes who took risks to secure our freedoms (e.g., Cesar Chavez, American farm workers)
  - Describe the ways in which local producers have used and are using natural resources, human resources, and capital resources to produce goods and services in the past and the present
  - Understand that some goods are made locally, some elsewhere in the United States, and some abroad

Art

- Artistic Perception
  - Describe how artists use tints and shades in painting
  - Identify and describe how foreground, middle ground, and background are used to create the illusion of space
  - Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, textures, space, and value

- Creative Expression
  - Student apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art
  - Explore ideas for art in a personal sketchbook
  - Mix and apply tempera paints to create tints, shades, and neutral colors
  - Paint or draw a landscape, seascape, or cityscape that shows the illusion of space
  - Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes from daily life

Lesson One - Looking for the Stories in Art:
Standards Addressed

<u>English Language Development</u>

- Listening and Speaking - Comprehension
  - Beginning
    - Begin to speak with a few words or sentences, using some English phonemes and rudimentary English grammatical forms (e.g., single words or phrases)
    - Answer simple questions with one to two word responses

- Retell familiar stories and participate in short conversations by using appropriate gestures, expressions, and illustrative objects

- Early Intermediate
  - Begin to be understood when speaking, but may have some inconsistent use of standard English grammatical forms and sounds (e.g. plurals, simple past tense, pronouns [he/she])
  - Ask and answer questions using phrases or simple sentences
- Intermediate
  - Listen attentively to stories/information and identify key details and verbal and nonverbal responses
- Early Advanced
  - Listen attentively to more complex stories and identify the main points and supporting details
- Advanced
  - Listen attentively to stories and identify the main points and supporting details
  - Demonstrate understanding of idiomatic expressions by responding to and using such expressions appropriately (e.g., "It's pouring outside.")

- Comprehension, Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication
  - Early Intermediate
    - Orally identify the main points of simple conversations and stories that are read aloud using phrases or simple sentences
  - Intermediate
    - Be understood when speaking, using consistent standard English grammatical forms and sounds; however, some rules may not be in evidence (e.g., third person singular, male and female pronouns)
    - Actively participate in social conversations with peers and adults on familiar topics by asking and answering questions and soliciting information
    - Retell stories and talk about familiar school-related activities using expanded vocabulary, descriptive words, and paraphrasing
  - Early Advanced
    - Retell stories in greater detail including characters, setting and plot, summary, and analysis

        - Be understood when speaking, using consistent standard English grammatical forms, sounds, intonations, pitch, and modulation, but may have random errors
        - Actively participate and initiate more extended social conversations with peers and adults on unfamiliar topics by asking and answering questions, restating and soliciting information
        - Ask and answer instructional questions with more extensive supporting elements (e.g., "What part of the story was most important?")
    - Advanced
        - Negotiate and initiate social conversations by questioning, restating, soliciting information and paraphrasing
        - Consistently use appropriate ways of speaking and writing that vary based on purpose, audience and subject matter

Language Arts

- Written and Oral English Language Conventions
    - Understand and be able to use complete and correct declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in speaking

- Identify subjects and verbs that are in agreement and identify and use pronouns, adjectives, compound word, and articles correctly in speaking
- Identify and use past, present, and future verb tenses properly in speaking
- Identify and use subjects and verbs correctly in speaking

- Listening and Speaking Strategies Comprehension
  - Retell, paraphrase, and explain what has been said by a speaker
  - Respond to questions with appropriate elaboration
- Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication
  - Organize ideas chronologically or around major points of information
  - Provide a beginning, a middle, and an end, including concrete details that develop a central idea
  - Use clear and specific vocabulary to communicate ideas and establish the tone
  - Clarify and enhance oral presentations through the use of appropriate props (e.g., pictures)
- Speaking Applications
  - Make brief narrative presentations:

- Provide a context for an incident that is the subject of the presentation
- Provide insight into why the selected incident is memorable
- Include well-chosen details to develop character, setting, and plot

Art

- Creative Expression
  - Apply artistic processes and skill to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art
  - Explore ideas for art in a personal sketchbook
  - Create a work of art based on the scenes in daily life
- Aesthetic Valuing
  - Students analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art including their own
  - Compare and contrast selected works of art and describe the, using appropriate vocabulary of art
  - Identify successful and less successful compositional and expressive qualities of their own works of art and describe what might be done to improve them

- Select an artist's work and using appropriate vocabulary of art, explain its successful compositional and communicative qualities

Focus Standards and Lesson

Language Arts

- Writing Strategies
  - Create a single paragraph
- Writing Applications
  - Write a narrative
  - Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details to present and support unified impressions of people, places, things, or experiences

Pre-assessment

Write a paragraph about a memorable event. (Note: Use assessment to determine students understanding of descriptive language and paragraph in order to guide instruction.)

Objective

Students will:

- orally tell about a memorable event in their lives to a partner, group.
- use past tense verbs in telling of event.

- sketch the event, label it, and discuss it with their group.
- discuss sketches in groups and what made them easy or difficult to understand.
- write a descriptive narrative using concrete sensory details.

Materials

Painted Memories/Spoken Words, 18 X 12 construction paper, writing paper, pencils, Self-Assessment and Reflection for Memorable Event (see Table 1 on p. 68)

Get Set/Build Background Knowledge

Teacher reads and discusses the book Painted Memories/Spoken Words. Teacher identifies the standards students are learning. Teacher explains that students are going to tell about an event from their life to a partner then create a storyboard about the event without using words. Since words cannot be used, it will be very important to include sequence and details. Later, students will label their sketches.

Vocabulary

Content - narrative, paragraph, adjectives, past-tense verbs, details, sequence

Functional - interview, record, sketch, list

Modeling

1. Teacher tells about an event from her/his life pointing out that it was in the past and that she is using past tense verbs in her description and telling the story in the order it happened.
2. Teacher sketches the event in storyboard format informing students that sketches are quick drawings using different type of lines. Points out past tense verbs and sequence.
3. Volunteers help teacher model how to ask interview questions and record information.

Cooperative groups

Whenever possible, students are arranged in language proficiency groups with beginning/early intermediate student; intermediate student; early intermediate/advanced student; and English only student.

Practice

1. Teacher identifies the standards the students are working on and why: how is it useful to their lives.
2. Procedures for use of tools and participation in groups are established.
3. Students orally tell their event to a partner. Partners ask clarifying questions.

4. Students join a cooperative group and orally tell their event again, clarifying where needed.
5. In cooperative groups, students sketch the event in a storyboard format using each other for support for ideas and language use. (18 x 9 construction paper folded into 8 - perfect time to use Math words - e.g., horizontal, vertical, line segment, rectangle, vertices)
6. Students share storyboards in their group. Group members discuss qualities that made storyboard easy to understand and make suggestions for where more details are needed. Students in the group may use interview questions again.
7. Students label the storyboard to describe what they are seeing (e.g., characters, objects).

Closure

Two groups join together and read the other group's storyboard without prompting or words. Person whom storyboard belongs to listens for accurate details and answers clarifying questions after the picture reading. Students reflect on their discussions and storyboard activity. Students complete a quick-write in journal. Teacher reflects on lesson (see Figure 2 on p. 69) and SDAIE strategies used (see Table 2 on p. 70).

Assessments

- Listen to students' events as they discuss them in groups listening for verb tenses, academic vocabulary, and art vocabulary (see Table 3 on p. 71).
- Look at storyboards and note details. (This can be used as a pre-assessment for the next art lesson. Watch for background, middle ground, foreground, characters, and details.)
- Students write a descriptive paragraph with concrete sensory details using past-tense verbs.

Table 1. Self-Assessment and Reflection for Memorable Event

Mark an X in the box below the 1, 2, 3, or 4 for each statement. 1 = Not so good. 2 = Well, I could do better. 3 = Cool! I did well. 4 = Wow! I was outstanding!				
How did I do?	1	2	3	4
I told my story with details.				
I know how to use verbs in the past tense.				
I drew a sketch with a background and characters				
I talked about my sketch.				
I told others what was good about their sketch.				
I told others what I had a hard time understanding about their sketch.				
List three things you might do differently next time.	1	2	3	

What evidence do I have that students understood the content of the lesson?

What worked well?

What did not work well?

What could/would I do differently next time?

Figure 2. Teacher Reflection Guide

Table 2. Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English Strategy Reflection Worksheet

Performance Criteria	1 Not done	2 Some/used to a limited degree	3 Used/done to a high degree
Visuals/realia, trade books, graphic organizers, rubrics			
Vocabulary taught in a comprehensible manner			
Background knowledge/prior experience tapped			
Task to be completed modeled			
Task organized to include procedural knowledge			
Students grouped appropriately for language abilities			
Multiple learning styles accommodated			
Higher order thinking skills incorporated into lesson (e.g., discussion questions, reflection logs, compare/contrast activities)			

- Not all strategies will be incorporated into every lesson but as many as possible should be used.

Table 3. Rubric for Memorable Event

Performance Criteria	Below Basic 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Advanced 4
Orally tells about a memorable event	Tells what event was with one detail	Tells about event giving 2 details	Tells about event giving at least 3 details; tells why event was memorable	Tells about event giving several details; tells why event was memorable
Uses past tense verb	Uses present tense verbs	Uses some past tense with present tense verbs	Uses mostly past tense verbs; some irregular verbs used incorrectly	Uses past tense verb including irregular verbs correctly
Gives enough detail for others to understand setting and characters of event by using visual only	No setting; characters are visible; few details in sketch	Limited setting; Characters are visible; some details included in sketch	Setting and characters are visible; details of sequence of events are logical	Setting and characters are visible; details in sequence of events are logical and obvious
Discusses sketch with group	Does not participate in discussion	Limited participation in discussion	Participates in discussion and asks clarifying questions	Participates in discussion; asks clarifying questions; discusses easy or difficult to understand visuals

Lesson Two - Memorable Details: Narrative Writing

ELD Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Beginning
  - Create simple sentences or phrases with some assistance
- Early Intermediate

- Write short narrative stories that include elements of setting and character

- Intermediate
  - Begin to use a variety of genres in writing (e.g., expository, narrative, poetry)
- Early Advanced
  - Write a detailed summary of a story
- Advanced
  - Write short narratives that describe the setting, character, objects, and events

ELA Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Create a single paragraph
- Write a narrative
- Revise drafts to improve the coherence and logical progression of ideas by using an established rubric

Art Standards: Artistic Perception and Creative Expression

- Identify and describe how foreground, middle ground, and background are used to create the illusion of space
- Create a work of art based on scenes in daily life

Pre-assessment

Discuss students conceptions about background, middle ground, and foreground; use samples of student sketches

to point out any that did create backgrounds, middle ground, and foreground; use student writing to guide instruction in this lesson.

Objective

Students will:

- create a setting using torn tissue paper including a background, middle ground, and foreground.
- revise memorable event paragraph to include more descriptive details including the setting of the event using past-tense verbs.

Materials

Memory Builder Worksheet (see Figure 3 on p. 78), pencils, Construction paper 9 X 12, assorted tissue paper, glue stick, Descriptive Sentences Worksheet (see Figure 4 on p. 79), Sketch and Tissue Paper Comparison Matrix (see Table 4 on p. 80), Self-Assessment Reflection (see Figure 5 on p. 81), writing paper

Get Set/Build Background Knowledge

Teacher will identify the standards students are focusing on and why. Teacher reviews Painted Memories/Spoken Words asking students to describe to a partner how the author showed the reader what the girl's story was. Teacher will discuss students' sketches about a memorable event and explain to

students that they will be adding more concrete sensory details to their paragraphs by creating a new picture of the setting using tissue paper. Artists create their pictures in layers. That is what we are going to do. The first layers are the background, middle ground, and foreground. After looking at some backgrounds in some picture books and our textbooks, we are going to record data in a Memory Builder worksheet to help us remember more details about our event.

Vocabulary

Content - narrative, sensory, details, descriptive, adjective, past-tense verbs, revise, setting, background, middle ground, foreground Functional - worksheet, create, data, record, interview, interviewer, interviewee

Modeling

1. Teacher has a student interview her/him using the Memory Builder Worksheet. Interviewer records the data then gives it to the interviewee at end of interview.
2. Teacher reminds students she/he is using past-tense verbs because the event already happened.

3. Teacher models creating different layers for the background, middle ground, and foreground based on her/his memory builder worksheet.

Cooperative groups

Whenever possible, students are arranged in language proficiency groups with beginning/early intermediate student; intermediate student; early intermediate/advanced student; and English only student.

Practice

1. Teacher identifies the standards students are working on and why: how is it useful to their lives.
2. Procedures for working with supplies and participating in groups are reviewed.
3. Students work in pairs to interview each other and record data about memorable event in sketches from previous lesson using the memory builder worksheet.
4. Students use the memory builder worksheet to help choose appropriate colors for their artwork to match information in memory builder for background, middle ground, and foreground.
5. Students add other descriptive details to pictures.
6. Student discuss in groups details they have added to their pictures.

7. Students help each other come up with at least one concrete sensory detailed sentence they could add to their memorable event narrative and write it on worksheet.

Closure

Students compare and contrast their memorable event sketch with their tissue paper art and explain which they like best and why. Students reflect on their tissue paper art. Students complete a quick-write in journal.

Assessment

Students use sketch and tissue paper picture to help them revise memorable event paragraph into a more descriptive narrative with concrete sensory details.

What time of year was it?

spring summer fall winter school-year

vacation holiday _____ _____

What was the weather like?

cool hot warm rainy snowy

breezy windy _____ _____

Where were you?

home outside inside amusement park

friend's house aunt's house backyard

uncle's house in the mountains at the beach

_____ _____ _____

Was it morning, afternoon, or evening?

What types of things were around you?

mountains houses city buildings hills

ocean lake river pond

_____ _____ _____

Who was with you?

_____ _____ _____

What else can you add? _____

Figure 3. Memory Builder Worksheet

Descriptive sentences I could add to my memorable event story:

1. _____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

Draw a rectangle around the adjectives (describing words) you have in your sentences.

Figure 4. Descriptive Sentences Worksheet

Table 4. Sketch and Tissue Paper Comparison Matrix

Characteristics	#1 Sketch	#2 Tissue Paper Picture	Same	Different
Background				
Middle ground				
Foreground				
Characters				
Details				

Note. From *Creating a standards-driven learning community: Level II/III*, by W. Chalk & S. Ramirez, 2003. Adapted with permission from the authors.

Did you include a background? If not, why?

_____

_____

Did you include a middle ground?

_____

Did you include a foreground?

_____

What was your favorite detail that you added to your picture? Why? _____

_____

_____

Compare your tissue paper setting with your event sketch.

Which do you like better? Why? _____

_____

_____

Figure 5. Self-Assessment Reflection

Lesson Three - Contouring and Classifying Leaf Structures

ELD Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Beginning
  - o Create simple sentences or phrases with some assistance
- Early Intermediate

- Follow a model given by the teacher to independently write short paragraphs of at least four sentences

- Intermediate
  - Independently create cohesive paragraphs that develop a central idea with consistent use of standard English grammatical forms. (Some rules may not be in evidence)
- Early Advanced
  - Arrange compositions according to simple organizational patterns
- Advanced
  - Write short narratives that include examples of writing appropriate for language arts and other content areas (e.g., math, science, social studies)

ELA Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Create a single paragraph
  - Develop a topic sentence
  - Include simple supporting facts and details
- Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details

Science Standards: Life Sciences and Investigation and Experimentation

- Plants have structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction
- Collect data in an investigation and analyze those data to develop a logical conclusion

Art Standards

- Artistic Perception
  - Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture

Pre-assessment

Develop a KWL chart with students to determine what they know about the leaves of a plant and what their purpose is for the plant. Use the chart to write an expository paragraph about leaves.

Objective

Students will:

- draw contour drawings of a variety of leaves.
- create a collage of leaves classifying them by shape, size, color, texture or a combination of criteria and explain the reason for their classification.
- investigate the structure and function of leaves from text book and trade books.

- complete a group and individual KWL chart throughout the investigation explaining what they learned about leaves and their functions.
- write an expository paragraph including a topic sentence and supporting facts and concrete sensory details.

Materials

KWL Chart (see Table 5 on p. 91), white copy paper, leaves of different shapes and sizes, light weight paper for crayon rubbings, Leaf Observation Log (see Table 6 on p. 92), trade books about plants at a variety of reading levels including picture books, Science text book, pattern blocks, geometric solids, Walk About Worksheet (see Table 7 on p. 93), different colors of construction paper, pencils, crayons, Classification Worksheet (see Table 8 on p. 94), geometric shapes, Classification Reflection (see Figure 6 on p. 95)

Get Set/Build Background Knowledge

Teacher reads and discusses book, Amelia's Road to introduce concepts of plants, maps, landforms and movement of people.

Vocabulary

Content - topic sentence, fact, detail, adjectives, present-tense verbs, leaves, structure, function, organic, geometric

Functional - draw, rub, data, record, chart, list, analyze

Note: Throughout all of the activities, the teacher should ask students what the topic of study is and what facts and details they have discovered as s/he works with the groups.

Modeling

1. Teacher identifies the standards the students are working on and why: how is it useful to their lives.
2. Review how to work in a cooperative group and take turns giving information to be written on KWL Chart.
3. Teacher will model how to complete a contour drawing by looking only at the leaf and tracing the outline with her/his finger first, then tracing this outline on paper while holding leaf in front of her/him. Teacher explains that to complete a contour drawing student does not look at paper to see what s/he is drawing.
4. Teacher models how to trace and cut out geometric shapes to design a background for leaf collage.

5. Teacher models how to make a leaf rubbing so that it shows the details of the leaf.
6. Teacher reviews how to classify items in a Venn diagram based on similarities and differences.

Cooperative groups

Whenever possible, students are arranged in language proficiency groups with beginning/early intermediate student; intermediate student; early intermediate/advanced student; and English only student.

Practice

1. Procedures for working with supplies and participating in groups are reviewed.
2. Working in cooperative groups, students work together to complete the K and W sections of their KWL Chart. Emphasize that it is OK to discuss and share information.
3. Groups share back information as teacher compiles a class KWL Chart. Any additional questions are added to chart.
4. Working in cooperative groups, students are given at least five different shaped and sized leaves to complete contour drawings. Students look at and discuss similarities and differences in leaves.

5. Given an 8½ x 11 piece of white blank paper, students are given the following directions.

   Directions are modeled and given as follows (SLOWLY AS STUDENTS FOLLOW EACH STEP AFTER WATCHING TEACHER MODEL THE STEP):

   - Take the top left vertex of your paper and align it to the right vertex
   - Hold the two vertices in place with your right index and middle finger
   - Slide your left hand to the left of the paper and crease the paper down to the bottom creating a vertical fold
   - Open the paper and take the top left vertex and fold it down to the bottom left vertex
   - Hold the two vertices in place with your left index and middle finger and slide your right hand to the top and across to the left creating a horizontal fold
   - Starting in the top left corner of each rectangle, number your rectangles 1 - 4 on the front and 5 - 6 on the back

6. Students complete contour drawings in groups rotating leaves amongst each other. (Note: It will be difficult for students to stay exactly in boxes on

paper but this gives them an element of space to work within. This is a fun activity with a lot of laughter.)

7. Students add descriptions to Leaf Observation Log in groups; groups report out to add describing words/adjectives to class reference chart. (e.g., short, long, thick, thin, pointy, rough, smooth, oval, wide, multihued, crisp, soft, jagged, soft)
8. Given the science textbook and a variety of trade books, students work in groups to investigate and gather data on the functions of leaves and why they have different structures. (e.g., cactus has spines, jade plant has very thick waxy leaves). Students add learned information to KWL Chart in the L (Learned) section and site the source (e.g., All About Leaves, p. 4) on the chart. (This requires the student to be able say "how" s/he knows the information and other groups the opportunity to find the information also.)
9. Teacher will explain that artists say leaves and objects we find in nature have organic shapes. Objects we build like roads, buildings, school, and houses have geometric shapes. Show students pattern blocks and geometric solids and model how we use these shapes to build things. In pairs, students

record data on the Walk About Worksheet as they walk around outside and sketch and list objects they see as either organic or geometric making note of colors as well.

10. Using geometric shapes and colored construction paper have students cut out different shapes and design a background for their leaf collage.
11. Each cooperative group is given a variety of leaves from which to make leaf rubbings.
12. Groups discuss what new information or details they now notice on the leaves. List details on the Classification Worksheet. Report out to whole class to add information to a class observation list of descriptive (adjective) words.
13. Students cut out and classify their leaves in a Venn diagram. Then glue by classification onto the geometric background they designed.
14. Students add any final information to the KWL chart individually.

Closure

Students compare their collage with other group members and explain why they classified their leaves the way that they did. Students complete a quick-write in journal.

Assessment

Students complete the Classifying Worksheet individually. Students write a preliminary draft of an expository paragraph about leaves and their structures and functions.

Table 5. Know What Learn Chart

What do I know about leaves of a plant? What are the leaves functions?	What do I want to know about the leaves of a plant and their function?	What did I learn about the leaves of a plant and their function? Where did I find the information?

Table 6. Leaf Observation Log

Using your senses of sight, hearing, touch, and smell, (we won't taste the leaves, YET!) list words that can describe your observations.				
Sight	Hearing	Touch	Smell	Taste (Not Yet)

Table 7. Walk About Worksheet

Classify, sketch, and list what you see.

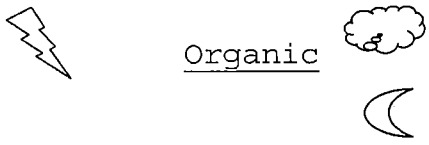
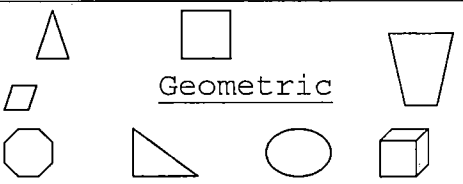
 Organic	 Geometric

Table 8. Classification Worksheet

Look for patterns in the leaves.

What exactly do you see?

Look for details.

What do you know about the leaves after examining them closely?

Leaf	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Long								
Short								
Thick								
Thin								
Pointy								
Smooth								
Hard								
Soft								
Crisp								
Fuzzy								
Rough								

What leaves did I put together?

Why did I group the leaves this way?

What is the same about the leaves?

What is different about the leaves?

Is there a leaf that does not belong to a group?

What should I do with this one?

Figure 6. Classification Reflection

Lesson Four - Structures and Functions of Leaves: Expository Writing

ELD Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Beginning
  - Create simple sentences or phrases with some assistance
- Early Intermediate
  - Follow a model given by the teacher to independently write short paragraphs of at least four sentences
- Intermediate
  - Independently create cohesive paragraphs that develop a central idea with consistent use of standard English grammatical forms (Some rules may not be in evidence)
- Early Advanced
  - Arrange compositions according to simple organizational patterns
- Advanced
  - Write short narratives that include examples of writing appropriate for language arts and other content areas (e.g., math, science, social studies)

ELA Standards: Writing Strategies and Applications

- Create a single paragraph
  - Develop a topic sentence
  - Include simple supporting facts and details
- Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details

Science Standards: Life Sciences and Investigation and Experimentation

- Plants have structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction
- Collect data in an investigation and analyze those data to develop a logical conclusion

Art Standards: Connections, Relationships, and Applications

- Write a story (paragraph) inspired by their own works of art

Pre-assessment

Students will think/pair/share about what they know about writing good paragraphs. As students share out, the teacher listens for what students' misconceptions are and/or identifies students who have no knowledge of the concept of paragraphs.

Objectives

Students will:

- revise expository paragraph by organizing it into topic sentence with concrete sensory descriptions of facts and details.

Materials

Rough draft of expository paragraph about leaves, green, yellow, and red colored sentence strips, green, yellow, and red colored pencils, writing paper, and pencils, Third Grade Writing Rubric (see Table 9 on p. 102)

Get Set/Build Background Knowledge

Today you are going to use your collage, observation log, and KWL chart to revise your paragraph about leaves. Between the three, you will have enough research to revise your paragraph on the structure and functions of leaves. I am going to show how to use a writing tool to see if you have all of the parts of a good paragraph. Just as an artist uses layers in his/her painting or artwork to show background, middle ground, and foreground, then adds details to give us the whole picture, our writing must do the same thing. In writing we call the whole picture the paragraph.

Vocabulary

Content - expository, paragraph, topic sentence, fact, detail, example, explanation

Functional - revise, copy, discuss, analyze, compare

Modeling

1. Teacher asks students to give sample sentences from their writing. With each response s/he asks, "Is this a topic sentence? Is the information you are giving a fact, detail, or example/explanation?
2. Teacher writes the students' sentences on colored sentence strips according to type of information given in sentence (e.g., Green - topic, yellow - fact/detail, red - explanation/example).
3. Using a pocket chart, the teacher models how to move the sentences around to form a paragraph. (Don't forget to indent!) When a sentence strip doesn't fit into the space on the pocket chart, the teacher asks the student to whom the sentence belongs if it is OK to tear the sentence to make it fit.
4. Moving down and across to the correct alignment on left, teacher puts the rest of the sentence in the next slot of the chart. (In this way modeling the format of the paragraph is occurring.)

5. Teacher continues until there is a complete paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting details, and conclusion sentence.

Cooperative Groups

Whenever possible, students are arranged in language proficiency groups with beginning/early intermediate student; intermediate student; early intermediate/advanced student; and English only student.

Practice

1. Teacher identifies the standards the students are working on and why: how does it affect their lives.
2. Students are each given smaller colored sentence strips that will fit on their desks. In cooperative groups, working on one group members paragraph at a time, students help each other classify the sentences in their paragraphs and write them on the corresponding colored sentence strip.
3. Students arrange sentence strips into the shape of a paragraph including indention. If students discover that they actually have more than one paragraph, they model this by making a new indention.
4. Students use the KWL chart and observation list (their own or the class copy) to add any type of

sentence that is missing from their paragraph or to add more detail if the group has decided they need more information.

5. Students are introduced to the thesaurus and how to use it to find synonyms for repeated words in their paragraphs.
6. Students cross out any words they want to change in their paragraph and substitute words from the thesaurus.

Closure

Students read their paragraph models to each other and rate them based on the third grade rubric explaining why they gave it the score that they did. Students complete a quick-write in journal.

Assessment

Students revise their expository paragraph on the structure and function of leaves on a plant using a topic sentence, at least two facts or details, and concrete sensory descriptions.

Table 9. Third Grade Writing Rubric

Performance Level	Writing Applications, Writing Strategies, and Written Conventions
4 Advanced (Exceeds the Grade Level Standard)	"4" papers meet all "3" requirements in addition to elements beyond grade level. Examples might include: • Vivid descriptions allowing the reader to clearly visualize the person • Uses multiple-paragraphs and point of view based upon purpose and audience • Uses a variety of sentence types
3 Proficient (Meets the Grade Level Standard)	• Addresses all parts of the prompt • Uses an adequate number and quality of concrete sensory details to create a clear picture • Structures one or more paragraphs with a topic sentence and supporting details • Logical progression of ideas • Uses complete and correct sentences • Makes few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization (do not interrupt the readers understanding)
2 Basic (Approaches the Grade Level Standard)	• Addresses most parts of the prompt • Uses some sensory details to illustrate the person • Uses disorganized paragraphs • Ideas may not progress logically • Uses correct sentences inconsistently • Makes errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization interrupt the readers understanding of the piece • Has some problems with legibility or spacing
1 Below Basic (Below the Grade Level Standard)	• Fails to address the prompt • Uses little or no sensory details to create a clear picture • Does not organize work into paragraphs • Ideas do not progress logically • Uses many incomplete and incorrect sentences • Makes many confusing mistakes in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization • Has significant problems with legibility

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Just as whole language never said not to teach phonics or phonemic awareness, using sheltered instruction strategies or SDAIE does not mean that a rigorous standards-based curriculum is not taught. The ideal is that students in SDAIE classrooms are at the intermediate level of English language proficiency and have primary language academic language. Unfortunately, this is often not the case for English Language Learners in California public schools. Therefore, educators must find a way to deliver instruction to students across proficiency levels, from beginning to advanced, in a manner that allows them to continue to develop language proficiency and develop cognitive academic language at the same time. When teachers follow the model to plan, teach, assess, and reflect, then use the assessment and their reflections to guide instruction, they are a much greater resource for their students.

Following Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the use of cooperative groups, and the use of mediated structures within those groups and throughout the curriculum, gives English Language Learners the opportunity to build their

cognitive contructs in a manner that is comprehensible to them. It provides a safe low affective environment as discussed by Krashen (1994) that allows the English Learner to take risks and find meaning in their communication with others and develop an understanding of the curriculum.

This project has demonstrated that the possibilities of using art in the classroom to build language proficiency, literacy, and cognitive skills are endless. All students have knowledge that they bring to the classroom. Using art as a mediated structure with English Language Learners is one means to build background knowledge and experiences that allow them to participate in the rigorous curriculum and standards adopted by the state of California, especially in the area of writing. It is a means for them to demonstrate what they know even before their proficiency is advanced enough to express it verbally.

It is the responsibility of educators to find the most effective way to allow children to share that knowledge, reflect on it, and move to the next level. We have to know where we are going before we decide how to get there and what mode of transportation we need to use. If our goal is to leave no child behind, then we cannot

always do what we have always done. If we want new results for English Learners, then we must continually try new things just as we expect our students to try new things daily.

This project and the idea of using art as a mediated structure to enhance third grade students' descriptive writing is an innovative framework that allows students to come to know the essential understandings being taught in an authentic context rather than in isolation. It is intended to demonstrate that by holding the content standards in one hand and a little creativity in the other, educators can be the vehicle by which our English Language Learners move on to the next level of language proficiency and cognitive development.

This project has instilled in me the need to reflect on what is being taught and why, and reevaluate how the content standards are approached. It has demonstrated that integrating the curriculum across content standards through thematic units is the best way to make the curriculum meaningful to English Language Learners, in fact, all learners. It is impossible to teach all of the content standards in all curricular areas, but it is hoped that this project has demonstrated that many standards are touched on daily and repeatedly when the curriculum is

integrated and writing is used as a tool to allow students to think about and clarify their understanding. The goal then is to determine which standards are the most meaningful for our students and which have a long lasting effect and use throughout their lives.

The forward in the Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools (1999) states,

> No more important public service exists than to ensure that when children leave our schools as young adults, they are empowered with the language skills they need to be successful, contributing members of an information society that relies increasingly on the power and richness of language for effective communication" (p. iv).

As was stated in the beginning of this project, knowledge is power. It is the hope that this project gives teachers an opportunity to reflect on their current practices and take the risk to step out on the edge of what they are learning and try something new to meet the needs of students.

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